



## the first piercings by affairiste

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**Summary:** mileven; AU taking place autumn of 1987, El gets her ears pierced on her 16th birthday (fluff!)

## the first piercings

**mileven**; AU taking place autumn of 1987, El gets her ears pierced on her 16th birthday (fluff!)

*note: this is my first fic and i have no idea how to get into character so most of this is very much made up/yikes*

Hopper always said, there is a first time for everything. Well, for as long as El knew him. The morning of her sixteenth birthday was another first. She assumed the bad "firsts" were already over with; scraping her knee on gravel while learning how to ride a bike, going to the dentist, Joyce's dog biting her while approaching him too suddenly (the same day she declared she was not a "dog person.")

...What else could there possibly be?

The basement of the Wheeler's home was El's freshly furnished bedroom. The decision was made between Joyce and Karen. Hopper would have been included in making that decision considering he was the only father figure after you-know-who, but the women quickly deemed his home not child proof with the first inspection, so he was really only there for support. All of the Halloween costumes, old cardboard boxes and empty spaced were quickly replaced when El moved in. The only thing that didn't budge was the designated D&D table, but Karen only agreed to keep it in Eleven's room because she didn't want to have to constantly clean the kitchen of unwanted pizza boxes and dice that were too painful to be stepped on. That was what she claimed the reason was, at least.

Mike gave El a rude awakening the morning of her sixteenth birthday. It was on a beautiful and chilly Saturday, meaning the perfect day to throw a party; no school for the kids, and no work for the adults. He came running down the stairs, not minding to control the volume of his feet stomping on each step. Lucas claimed he was probably more excited for her birthday than she was, which was partially true.

"Happy Birthday Eleven!" he exclaimed before he had even made it to her bedframe. He knelt down right next to the bed, getting as close as

possible without actually being on it. As if that was the considerate part.

"Mike, go away." El murmured. She was not a morning person, so this was something that didn't phase him. Mike ignored her comment and began to shake her side.

"It's your birthday!" Mike repeated, still with that infectious smile of his. It was 6:04 in the morning; no one in the house was awake yet, but he wanted to make sure he was the first to greet her on her special day.

Eleven turned over and let out a big huff, but when she saw his face, she smiled back. She just couldn't help it. "Thank you, Mike."

He got up on the bed and laid on his back, staring up at the ceiling. "I'm so glad you're here, El," he whispered. "I know," El replied, "you tell me every morning."

"But I mean it! You—"

"Mike, you mean it every morning."

"But I—"

Mike was cut off once again when Nancy came down the stairs, grumpy as ever. "Mike! Can you be a little quieter at six in the morning, please?! It's too early to be dealing with your crap," she said to him, throwing her sleep mask in his direction. "...and happy birthday, Eleven." Nancy smiled a sweet smile at her second little sister. Eleven gave her a wide grin and thanked her. One for the birthday wish, and two for getting Mike to shut up.

It was true; seemingly every morning he would remind El about how much he missed her while she was missing. She usually listened, it was a nice pep talk for her day, but Dustin would claim putting her on such a pedestal would be bad for her ego. That, too was close to the truth, though. After hearing Wheeler rant on and on about how grateful he is for her return, she sometimes would use it to keep herself out of trouble. One time she pulled the puppy eyes on him and he forgot all about the fact she hid the dice in the middle of a

campaign so they were forced to rewatch The Neverending Story with her for the millionth time.

In the afternoon, around one o'clock, everyone was piled up in the Wheeler's kitchen. Lucas, Dustin, Will's family, Hopper, and oddly enough Steve attended for her special day. (Eleven didn't know Steve too well, other than the fact he was dating Nancy and he liked to sneak into the house late at night. She didn't complain.)

"Happy birthday to you, happy birthday to you, happy birthday dear E-leven, happy birthday to you!" they all sung to her as she stood, and she was sitting right in front of a large strawberry flavored cake with vanilla icing. On top was a strawberry Eggo with sixteen candles poked through. It wasn't a neat looking cake whatsoever, but Dustin says he made it with love.

"Would it be rude to push her face in the cake?" Lucas whispered into Will's ear during the singing. Will could barely hold back his laugh. "That will get you suspended from the campaign for the rest of the month..." he whispered back to his friend.

Eleven blew out each candle after about four or five tries. Why did it need such a technique, every time? El shrugged to herself. Everyone sat down once the singing was over and Karen sliced each person their own slice.

"Time for presents!" Dustin cheered. Eleven blushed; she would never get used to having all eyes on her. One by one, she ripped open all sorts of colorful wrapping paper. For the most part, she received new clothes, which she loved. Her style mainly consisted of the usual pastels the boys dressed her in when they took her to school a few years ago, minus a wig. Eleven admired Nancy's elegant sweaters, skirts and necklaces so much, she wore the old hand-me-downs almost more than she did her own clothes. Karen was the only one who bothered to get her something educational, but she already knew that; at the edge of the table sat a stack of new chapter books for El to read. Eleven secretly still prefers the picture books, and takes it from Will. They were the ones drawing whenever the other boys were doing tricks on their skateboards or wrestling each other for the television remote. She was thankful she had that bond with Will.

"Eleven, I have a surprise for you too." Hopper spoke up. Joyce cocked an eyebrow; she saw him walk in empty handed when they all were coming in.

"What is it?" Eleven's eyes sparkled as she grew curious.

"Yeah, Jim. I thought—" Joyce began to retort, but Hopper shot it down. He pulled a small velvet box from his front right pocket and gave it to El. She opened it, expecting a necklace, but instead were two small diamond earrings.

"What are these?" she asked with furrowed brows.

"Earrings," he answered, and she immediately gave herself a mental slap. Earrings, she thought, of course they are.

But, she didn't have her ears pierced!

"She doesn't have her ears pierced!" Joyce reminded him with a tap on the arm.

"I'm not an idiot—we're going to get your ears pierced, El!" he smiled. Hopper had been trying to be a good parental figure for Eleven ever since she came back. In fact, she found him first among the scattered trailers in the woods of Hawkins. He promised himself he wouldn't let her go this time, no matter what. It was an unspoken relationship between the two, but all of the adults knew that she will one day ask him to be the one to walk her down the aisle. Nobody could deny it; he was doing a good job.

They found a small store in the mall to get the procedure done. El had no idea what she involuntarily gotten into. The large group shrunk down to just the boys, Hopper, and herself. Hop didn't have enough room in the car for all of them, but he was the chief, so he allowed himself to break a few rules and just had the boys sit on top of each other in the back of his car.

"El, are you gonna be okay? I will hold your hand. Promise. It won't be too bad." Mike grabbed her hand to hold. She didn't know what he was talking about, so she ignored his warnings. "I'm okay," she put simply.

They entered the store still hand in hand behind everyone else. Eleven was sat down by a lady in all black and looked directly in front of a mirror. She had a headband holding back her bangs that usually fell right across her forehead. The rest of her hair, although kept short and barely going passed her shoulders, was put into two temporary pigtails. The worker explained to her the events that were soon to take place, but El wasn't truly listening.

"I'm ready!" she smiled. She gave Mike a quick glance of assurance before looking back at the worker. The woman drew two aligned dots on her ears and got out the gun. That caught El's attention. "Wait!"

"1... 2... 3!" the woman poked the first hole right on the last number.

Eleven wasn't fully suspecting of what was about to happen, so she went into a little more shock than normal. Quickly, tears swelled into her eyes.

"El!" Mike frowned.

"Oh, shut up, Mike. We all knew she was gonna cry," Lucas chuckled, watching her freak out. "You can kill monsters but not get your ears pierced?"

"You shut up! It still hurts!" Mike shoved him in Eleven's defense, causing Lucas to do it right back, and eventually they both were literally pushing their limit. Hopper stepped in and grabbed their collars, yanking them back from each other.

"She's fine now. Look," Hop rolled his eyes. Dustin and Will were already wiping away the waterworks lovingly for their friend. Mike frowned, "Hey..."

After the second punch, El was admiring herself in the mirror. "I love it," she said with a genuine smile. Hopper put her hand on her shoulder and kept it there.

By the end of the day, Eleven had no complaints. Her ears were red and swollen and her stomach ached from all the cake and ice cream prepared for her day, but she didn't care. She laid in bed that night, and for the first time, she felt like she truly belonged; not just cause

Mike or Joyce said she did, but because she knew she did.

Mike was tip toeing down the stairs to be more considerate this time, but paused when he saw her already laying on her side with her back turned to him. He slowed himself down even more and peered over to see if her eyes were closed, which they were to his dismay.

"Goodnight El," he whispered and kissed her head, "happy birthday."

the end!

i'm not used to writing but thank you for reading if you did! i hope i can improve and get some feedback! greatly appreciated, friends

((i didnt proof read either lmao so REALLY sorry for any dumb mistake i swear i am literate))